

Ideology

and the

Identity Crisis

of

ANARCHISM

by

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A **GRAUSPACE** publication. 1998.
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Ed,

Thanks for the interest. I gotta tell you that this pamphlet was written about 2 years ago. I'm not sure if it is necessarily an accurate account of where I'm at now. But regardless it's worth reading I suppose.

In the 2 years since I've been out of school I've really struggled with my own views on anarchism, i.e. "where I stand" or "what kind of anarchists I am." I'm definitely anti-statist + anti-capitalist, but I'm still searching for a coherent vision for myself and more importantly a way of exercising that vision. I've basically stopped writing altogether. I suppose it will come some. I guess I'm telling you all this so that you will take what is here w/a grain of salt, as a snapshot of my consciousness at one specific point in time. Email me or grawd.sicinus.com and let me know what you think.

Introduction:

The Identity Crisis of Anarchism

.....everyone believes himself to be superior to his opponents on ideological grounds. That is why we are so disunited and fragmented, and can no longer join for a common activity should there be a need to do so. Thus passion and fanaticism always prevail. But the idea of coexistence in solidarity has been launched and it will become a reality in the future, when intellectual dictatorships as well as material dictatorships have been abolished. - Max Nettlau 1

What is anarchism ? Is it a socio-political ideology ? Is it a revolutionary socialist movement from a time long ago ? Is it a state of being ? Is it a purely negative reactionary posture ? Is it a philosophy ? Is it a personal moral code ? Is it a futuristic utopia ? Is it all of the above ? I raise such elementary questions because no one, least of all anarchists themselves, seems to have decided. *Should they have to ?*

What I am specifically referring to is what I term the identity crisis of anarchism. Against the backdrop of the negation of authoritarian structures and practices, anarchist theorists have attempted to illustrate stateless societies devoid of hierarchical, coercive, or exploitative social structures or practices based on the premise of humanity arriving at its greatest possible level of freedom, i.e. anarchy. Within this spectrum lies a diverse grouping of sects, programs, theories, organizations, philosophies, and individuals which comprise anarchism. Practical concerns which have defined the diversity in anarchist thought range from revolution, trade unions, representative bodies, social organization, the allocation of goods, technology, environmentalism, and means and modes production. Philosophical concerns which have divided anarchists range from the proper relationship

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of the individual to society and the limits of human freedom, to ontology, semiotics, reification, epistemology, ethics, and what constitutes reality. Also, sectarianism has also developed over specific issues and segments of the population such as Black Anarchism and Anarcha-Feminism, although the programmes of these are usually similar to the anarchist or syndicalist programmes.

In spite of these differences, what has maintained a level of coherence within anarchism is a radical fidelity of all anarchists towards principles of equality, liberty, and cooperation. But within the margins of its sectarian variance exists contradictions and competitions, criticisms and aspersions, divisiveness and dichotomies of a nature that brings to a head the question of the actual definition of anarchism itself.

I would like to point out two ways of looking at this diversity. One could propose that this high level of sectarianism is in fact a positive thing, a testament to the non-conformist, quasi-pluralistic character of anarchism. Or one could cry heresy, claim the definitional throne of anarchism, and make a call for the kind of ideological purification that Murray Bookchin proposes in his polemic *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm* 2.

Bookchin's diatribe is in fact not so unusual for anarchists, but the level and rate that this discussion occurs is absolutely peculiar to anarchism. No other strain of sociopolitical thought has struggled so consistently with the basic definition of its identity. Anarchist rivalries go beyond basic sectarianism differences where, for example, Maoists and Trotskyists can debate over basic tactical issues and interpretations of Marx, but they both understand each other to be Marxists 3. The identity crisis I am referring to relates to when anarchists actually do battle over whether or not a self-avowed anarchist is in fact so.

The clearest example of this identity crisis was during the rapid development of sectarianism which occurred

Goldman, Emma, *Anarchism and other Essays*. Toronto: Dover Publications, 1969

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59Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Portraits* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988). p.252.

60Ibid, p.251-2.

61Lenin's concept of factories being "schools of socialism" are not the social practices I am referring to. What I am referring to are pre-revolutionary social practices which are explicitly liberatory in action, not in their potential.

62Taken from Berkman, p.42.

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between 1880 and the 1910's. During this period, mutualists, collectivists, communists, and individualists first developed intense critical tones toward each other on a consistent basis. Some of the content of these critiques involved whether or not their adversaries were in fact anarchist enough or at all. Debates revolved around the strictly hypothetical and theoretical proposals of the different sects. A reaction to this infighting were "non-exclusive" anarchist writings from individuals like Montseny and Mello who, in essence stated that "we cannot foresee the economic developments of the future" and that "it was not right for us to split ranks over hypothesis whose choice was to decide the future" 4. Consider another quote from Max Nettlau, a one time anarcho-communist from the late 19th/early 20th century who eventually moved towards the "anarchism without adjectives" position:

We were so blind as to believe that only one among the outstanding thinkers, and only one among the doctrines, had gained a supremacy over all proceeding ones, and, since no one came out in opposition to Kropotkin and Tucker, we were convinced that these two alone had the last word on anarchist communism and anarchist individualism. We believed if one was right than the other was all wrong....5

The aforementioned Bookchin book is a modern manifestation of this tendency. Bookchin addressed the issue of anarchist identity by setting up a dichotomy between social anarchists (syndicalists and communists) and lifestyle anarchists (individualists, neo-situationists, and any one else not "social" by his definition). Bookchin's dichotomization is a traditional one which goes back as far as the debates between Benjamin Tucker and Peter Kropotkin 6 :

Like it or not thousands of self-styled anarchists have slowly surrendered the social core of anarchist ideas to the all-pervasive Yuppie and New Age personalism that marks this decadent, bourgeois -

ried era....and they eschew any serious commitment to an organized, programmatically coherent social confrontation with the existing order 7

When "zero-work" advocate Bob Black replied to Bookchin with his own diatribe titled *Anarchy after Leftism*, he spent an entire chapter (at least) attempting to prove that Bookchin was not in fact an anarchist, but a "Municipal Statist" and a closet Marxist among other things 8.

The typical objective of anarchist v. anarchist debates like these is the discovery of authoritarianism or bourgeois individualism in their adversaries work, two things which run counter to the principles of anarchism.

This desire to pin anarchism down is not simply a product stubbornness or elitism, although that can often be the case. As fluid as anarchism is, it's a very tempting impulse. It is my opinion that the perpetuity of this debate is for several reasons. First, anarchism as a socio-political theory is unique in that it has limited practical knowledge to go on, which makes it almost entirely theoretical. Liberals, conservatives, theocrats, and marxists all have actual manifestations of their socio-political theories. These governments and their societies have existed long enough to provide a critical space for improvement as well as a process which further defines and develops their theories. Anarchists do not have this experience to benefit from. There have been, and still are, communes, collectives, affinity groups, and other anarchist social organizations, some which have been maintained for extended periods of time⁹. But none of these organizations have been able to exist without participating in the capitalist world to some extent. Point being, self-sufficient, pure anarchist federations or organizations, in which their individual members or the organization as a whole have been able to provide for themselves without participating in capitalist modes of production/consumption have not been maintained for considerable periods of time either on a

1984), p.385.

35Rudolf Rocker *Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism* (London: Freedom Press, 1988), p.15.

36Bookchin, pg. 5.

37An example of a "post-structuralist" advancement of anarchism is The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism by Todd May (see bibliography).

38Murray Bookchin, *Remaking Society*, (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1989), p.174.

39Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, (London: Heinemann, 1902) p.118.

40May, p.63.

41George Woodcock, ed., *The Anarchist Reader*, (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1977), p.159.

42Alexander Berkman A.B.C. of Anarchism (London: Freedom Press, 1992), p. 9.

43There is a wide array of elaborate criticisms from different sides of the ideological spectrum, examples are: Robert Dahl's Democracy and its Critics; Marx's criticism of Stirner in The German Ideology and his criticism of Bakunin in On Bakunin's Statism and Anarchy, and Isaiah Berlin's Russian Thinkers.

44 A maxim of the author's own creation, thank you very much!!!

45This is why the term "anarcho-capitalist", a synonym for American laissez-faire libertarianism, is an oxy-moron.

46Emma Goldman *Anarchism and other Essays* (Toronto: Dover Publications, 1969), pp. 52-53.

47Goldman, p.53.

48Anarchists have usually limited their criticism of religion to the Judeo-Christian tradition.

49Morris, p.38.

50Daniel Guerin, *Anarchism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), pp.49-50.

51Black, ch.5.

52Black, p.82.

53Voline, *The Unknown Revolution* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1975), p.285

54Lorenzo Kom'Boa Ervin *Anarchism and the Black Revolution* (Philadelphia: Monkey Wrench Press, 1994), p.64

55Guerin, pp. 3-4.

56Berkman, p.29.

57Morris, p.75.

58Black, p.150.

is a simple analysis of the parts of ideology.

18 Ted Honderich, ed., The Oxford Companion to Philosophy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 376.

19 Bottomore, p. 215.

20 Ibid.

21 J.S. Mill, August Comte and Positivism (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961), p. 71.

22 Other codified restrictions on behavior come from other ideologies such as religion. Polygamy, statutory rape, and other illegal acts have those status in the U.S. largely due to the Christian tradition.

23 Massachusetts, Georgia, and Connecticut did not ratify until 1939.

24 Alexis De Toqueville, Democracy in America, (New York: Harper Collins, 1988), p. 360.

25 Robert Smith, Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era: Now You See It, Now You Don't (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), p. 8.

26 Prior to the civil rights legislation of the 1960's, the legal segregation that existed was in part based on the belief in the innate inferiority, morally, culturally, and otherwise, of black people.

27 Constitutional Amendments 13, 14, and 15 were the codified expression of this change in status as was the civil rights legislation of 1963.

The ethical nature of the Constitution itself did not. It was merely

expanded to include those it did not include prior.

28 Brian Morris, Bakunin: The Philosophy of Freedom (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1993), p. 106.

29 Peter L. Berger, The Capitalist Revolution: Fifty Propositions about Prosperity, Equality, and Liberty (New York: Basic Books, 1986), p. 110.

30 I state "over one hundred years" because full blown industrial capitalism did not reign supreme in the U.S. until after the civil war. During the Jacksonian Era, some of the Southern antagonism regarding the North was related to the expansion of Northern-style capitalism into Southern regions, threatening other traditional forms of production.

31 Louis Althusser, Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays (London: New Left Books, 1971), pp. 155-159.

32 An excellent example of the latter would be the Bolshevik repression of Anarchists during 1918-1921. Bolsheviks and Anarchists had both proclaimed "All power to the Soviets", but issues over methods of procurement and protection of that goal led to the battle between the two camps.

33 For an excellent outline of bias in social science research see Gunnar Myrdal's An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy, vol. II, Appendix 2.

34 Paul Rabinow, ed. The Foucault Reader (New York: Pantheon Books,

small or large scale. While some anarchist's claim ancient tribal societies as "anarchist" examples, these are practically irrelevant, albeit inspiring, as blueprints of a post-capitalist anarchist world. That is not to say that they cannot be utilized as examples to reinforce arguments for the capability of stateless/non-hierarchical/non-capitalist societies. But these societies are utterly distinct, culturally, historically, and otherwise from any society that all contemporary anarchists and others living in the modern world inhabit. Therefore, since you cannot erase nor recreate history, it would be impossible for future anarchists to emulate these tribal societies in a manner which does not take into account modern capitalist society as a historical/cultural factor 10. So, outside of a two month span in Spain during the Civil War, and a brief period of time in the Ukraine during the Russian Revolution, explicitly post-capitalist anarchist societies of a large scale have never existed long enough to make an impact on how anarchism manifests itself socially.

Secondly, anarchism does not rely upon the writings of a single individual to act as the ultimate defining judgment. With Marxism, the writings of Marx (and Engles) serve as the fundamental theoretical orientation. Granted, interpretations of their writings have become varied and sometimes controversial, but nonetheless Marxism has Marx to go back to as the ultimate authority. Anarchism does not have such a luxury (or baggage). Which single anarchist could perform the duty of ultimate authority and originator? Godwin, an English utopian socialist who wrote in the 18th century? Proudhon or Bakunin, a French mutualist and a Russian collectivist respectively, who both wrote during the 19th century? Benjamin Tucker, an American individualist who produced writings in the 19th and 20th centuries? That of course depends on your sectarian orientation (read: interpretation of anarchism). Anarchism has no precise moment of conception nor a single conceiver. It has from its

earliest origins flowed from several voices and has been diverse throughout. That being the case, anarchism will probably always remain theoretically diverse.

There are two other reasons which are interrelated that I feel are more urgent and relevant to this discussion: 1) that the principles of anarchism confound the essentialization of the term itself, and 2) this identity crisis within anarchism is not really about sectarianism or intellectual diversity, but instead relates to a question of ideology. It is this question with which this essay is concerned with: *Is anarchism as a set of principles appropriate or effective as an ideology?*

Anarchism is generally defined by the negation of authoritarian, coercive, and exploitative practices and structures. I am not suggesting that anarchism is purely reactionary or only accurately essentialized negatively. What I am suggesting is that the definition of anarchism in regards to its negation (what it stands opposed to) is easily defined and has been for nearly one hundred and fifty years. But, the positive definition of anarchism (what anarchism seeks to do or stands for) is, and always has been, an open question. There is a very good reason for that. To positively

essentialize the definition of anarchism to a specific space within its margins is to also define its preferred politics, preferred modes of production, preferred organizational models, preferred stances on tactics etc., that is, *to make anarchism an ideology*. That what was once a space within the margins now becomes the margins themselves. The ideology, instead of the principles, becomes the definition. When this occurs, all those outside of this space are determined to be non-anarchist, hence in-fighting, name-calling, and sectarianism. *This activity is in direct opposition to the principles of anarchism*. The placement of anarchism as an ideology creates an unsolvable problematic. There appears to be an inherent contradiction between a belief in a non-coercive

Notes

- 1Max Nettlau, A Short History of Anarchism (London: Freedom Press, 1996), p.201.
- 2Murray Bookchin, Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm. (San Francisco, Edinburgh: AK Press, 1995).
- 3Although, Marxism has twice struggled over this issue in a similar fashion: The controversy over Eduard Bernstein's style of reformist marxism and the evolution of Stalinism and its policy of "Socialism in One Country".
- 4Nettiau, p.201
- 5Ibid, p.200.
- 6Tucker and Kropotkin were actually extremely amicable towards one another, in a manner far removed from the present day relations between social/individual Anarchist authors. See Paul Avrich's Anarchist Portraits ch. 5 for more details.
- 7Bookchin, pp. 1-2.
- 8Bob Black, Anarchy after Leftism (Columbia, MO: C.A.L. Press, 1997), ch. 5.
- 9Freedom Press, a British Anarchist collective publishing house has been in existence for over 100 years.
- 10By saying this, I am not critiquing John Zerzan's theory of the "Future Primitive". Zerzan's portrait is in fact post-capitalist and he does not propose an emulation without this post-capitalist variable.
- 11As will be explained later, sectarianism does not automatically constitute ideological differences. It is possible to be sectarian without being ideological. But to be ideological guarantees sectarian divisions.
- 12Karl Marx The German Ideology, vol. I, pt. I. Taken from Tom Bottomore, ed., A Dictionary of Marxist Thought (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), p.219.
- 13Bottomore, pp. 219-220. Summation made by Jorge Larraín.
- 14Ibid, p.220.
- 15Martin Seliger, Politics and Ideology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 14.
- 16I am referring here to "political" ideology as opposed to other types of ideology such as religious, purely social ideology, and the ideology of science. Ideology has often been used as a synonym for metaphysical ethical beliefs as applied to an area of human practice, i.e. a notion of the entirety of existence, the ethical system which flows from it, and its application to the practice.
- 17Let me reiterate that I do not propose that the actual formation of ideology works as methodologically as I've outlined here. I am completely aware that the genealogy of ideology is a serious matter to take on. This

If your object is to secure liberty, you must learn to do without authority and compulsion. If you intend to live in peace and harmony with your fellow men, you and they should cultivate brotherhood and respect for each other. If you want to work together with them for your mutual benefit, you must practice co-operation. The social revolution means much more than the reorganisation of conditions only: It means the establishment of new human values and social relationships, a changed attitude of man to man, as of one free and independent to his equal: it means a different spirit in the individual and collective life, and that spirit cannot be born overnight. It is a spirit to be cultivated, to be nurtured and reared, as the most delicate flower is, for indeed it is the flower of a new and beautiful experience.

-Alexander Berkman 62

society and the manifestation of that belief into an ideology. It is the contention of this essay that ideologies are inherently, if not latently, coercive, therefore inappropriate in anarchist theory 11.

"What is anarchism?" has been the subject of many an anarchist's writing. Just look around at you local anarchist bookstore or peruse the section on anarchism in your local bookstore, you will find books replete with titles such as "What is Anarchism?"; "Everything You've Always Wanted to Know about Anarchism"; "Anarchism"; "The ABC's of Anarchism"; "Anarchism: Arguments For and Against"; "Reinventing Anarchism, Again"; and so on. To this very day anarchists as a whole spend an overwhelming amount of their energies theoretically defining, hence promoting, anarchism to the general public. It is not my conscious intent to add to the mountain of literature on this topic. In fact, history itself, as well as the aforementioned writings, have sufficiently taken on that task. Nor do I intend this to be a wishy-washy "can't we all just get along?" plead. Debate and diversity in thought should always be a cherished aspect of anarchism. Instead, I wish to potentially ameliorate a long running thorn in anarchism's side by taking to task the placement of anarchism as a socio-political ideology. If I am successful, I believe that anarchism could become more effective and understandable as a movement for social change. If this issue is not successfully addressed, I believe anarchists can look forward to a future much like their present: public apathy/ignorance, academic belittling, and continued infighting amongst sectarian persuasions. I am making the assertion that if anarchism truly stands for the ultimate in human freedom, it needs to move out of the realm of ideology and develop for itself a new space which is more practically oriented, as in "anarchism of the deed" not the word. As theory gives way to action through actual tangible manifestations of anarchist principles, I believe the

identity crisis facing anarchism will generally fade away.

I would also like to mention an article which appeared in the Spring 1998 issue of *Meander Quarterly* written by Dave Neal entitled "Anarchism: Ideology or Methodology". I had come across this article after having already finishing this work and was quite startled to find how closely Mr. Neal's sentiments echoed my own. Indeed there are stark differences in some of our opinions, I particularly disagree with his general characterization of ideological anarchists, and close agreements in others, such as the incompatibility of anarchism and ideology. But we both seem to have found the same destination through different paths. Neal seeks to define anarchism in terms of a methodology, whereas I do as well but also include ethics into the fold. It seems that the intent we both share is to shed anarchism of its theoretical infighting and make a call for a practical anarchism. If the reader finds this text a bit dry, I recommend his instead as it is written for publication as an article therefore more acute in scope and easily accessible.

In this essay I will first offer a definition of ideology and dissect its parts. By doing this I will lay the foundation for my argument that anarchist principles and ideology are incompatible. Then I will discuss the definition of anarchism as it relates to its formation as an ideology and as a set of principles in contradistinction to ideology. I will conclude with a discussion of practically-based alternatives to ideological anarchism.

What Is Ideology ?

They forget, however, that to these phrases they themselves are only opposing other phrases, and that they are in no way combating the real existing world. - Karl Marx 12

For nearly two centuries, political theorists and

of the EZLN in Chiapas is the most dramatic and well known example. The EZLN have yet to declare an allegiance to any single ideology. What is at stake there is the preservation of their culture and traditional productive practices. What they desire is not the overthrow of the central Mexican government but the maintenance of their own autonomous zone.

Here in the U.S., organizations such as Food Not Bombs, Homes Not Jails, Prisoners Literature Project, as well as various collectives, communes, and affinity groups serve as examples. Practical, non-ideological anarchism could manifest itself in the production of clothes, food, shelter, health care, etc. It could develop into production-based federations, locally, regionally, and globally. The limits of practical anarchist activity are yet to be determined and won't be until we push towards them. That way we can really answer some questions about the practicality of anarchist principles. To do that, anarchists must not only think for themselves, but also speak for themselves, and most importantly do for themselves.

Having an ethical aspect to an individual's consciousness may indeed be unavoidable. Intuitively, I would say that what initially attracts many people to anarchism in the first place is a higher sense of ethics than the one that society generally holds. That does not mean that what that individual holds to be just and practical is absolutely true and should be enforced upon all. That is how the State, capitalism, ideology, and all other coercive concepts, structures, and practices behave. Instead of simply reciting ideology (read: professing truth) at people, trying to live each day in a non-oppressive, non-exploitative, non-hierarchical manner and developing communities based on solidarity and mutual aid can attract others more effectively to anarchist principles by become a living example of them.

non-ideological? It is non-ideological for the reason that it lacks a totality of representation. There is no universal sense of ethics nor any reflective practices to be enforced into the masses. There would be no more room for abstract notions of truth, justice, and the anarchist way. All theoretical abstractions would be replaced by actual, empirical human behavior. Practical anarchism represents the interests of only those who partake in it. If that someday vastly encompasses the population, then and only then it is truly representative of the masses themselves. No ideology or theoretical system or vanguard party would be required. The masses would be truly representing themselves. What could possibly be more anarchist than that?

Syndicalism, communalism, communism, collectivism, temporary autonomous zones, and other forms of anarchism could practically develop simultaneously. The only qualifications would be their ability to maintain themselves practically and their adherence to anarchist principles.

It is "Anarchism of the deed" that could, in part, free anarchism from its sectarian divisions and inconsistencies. These sectarian divisions are based, for the most part, on judgments about anarchist theory, not anarchist lifestyles or communities or social practices. Traditionally, if an anarchist attached the suffix "syndicalist", "communist", or "individualist" to themselves, they were referring to their desires or opinions, but rarely ever did it describe their active life. If anarchists focused as much energy on creating social and productive organs based upon anarchist principles then they do throwing stones at the democratic/capitalist world and at each other, what a anarchist thinks would not be as substantively relevant as what a anarchist does.

There are many current examples of social organizations that act according to anarchist principles, not ideological ones. It would be quite accurate to say that the struggle

philosophers have been mulling over not only what ideology is, but what its role in society is and what effect it has on the individual. At one point in his life, Karl Marx held the opinion of ideology that:

the real problems of humanity are not mistaken ideas but real social contradictions and that the former are a consequence of the latter... as long as men are unable to solve these contradictions in practice, they tend to project them in ideological forms of consciousness... which conceal the existence and character of these contradictions.... Ideological distortions cannot be overcome by criticism, they can disappear only when the contradictions which give rise to them are practically resolved 13.

Marx, unlike most Marxists, held the negative view of ideology in that "it involves amisrepresentation of contradictions. It is restricted because it does not cover all kinds of errors and distortion." 14. A contemporary example of this use of the term ideology as a negative is when someone is accused of making an argument on "ideological" grounds, it is implied that the person stating the argument is being driven by political beliefs rather than by the facts of the situation. A neutral and more widely accepted definition of ideology is presented by Martin Seliger: "A set of ideas by which men posit, explain, and justify the ends and means of organized social action, irrespective of whether such action aims to preserve, uproot, or rebuild a given social order" 15. For this essay I will use a definition closer to Seliger's: ideology as a neutral term, used to describe a systematic theory (a system of beliefs) which regard the individual, groups of individuals, society, and social structures as they are relevant in a socio-political context 16.

Ideology has prior conditions to its existence which contribute to its formation. Society, its political practices and structures, and the historical currents which mold and shape it are just a few. It is not within the scope of this essay to

analyze this further. How ideologies are formulated is a complex area of study, certainly a job worthy of someone who has the inclination and ability to do so. Instead, I would like to analyze ideology in an objective state (what is it?) rather than employing a historical/phenomenological analysis (why it exists and where does it come from?). I will define and analyze ideology by breaking it down into five main components: a belief[s] in a human essence; a system of ethics reflective of that belief[s]; the relationship (criticism or adherence) of these to current socio-political practices and structures; its teleological intent (what it intends to create), and its practical expression ¹⁷.

There is a concept which plays an enormous role in the formulation of ideology, especially in the modern era. That is the concept of freedom. Emphasizing the relationship between freedom and ideology is relevant because the modern ideological paradigm is utterly dominated with concepts of freedom. When ideologies compete for the allegiance of the masses, the sales pitch is freedom. The dominant neo-liberal ideology proposes that no other socio-political system of arrangements could feasibly offer the degree of freedom for society that it does. Marxist, anarchist, and radical socialist ideologies claim to offer a more substantial and greater freedom. The practicality v. potentiality of freedom are reoccurring themes in ideological battles. When analyzing the five parts of ideology, I will discuss that parts relationship to freedom. I will at the end summarize freedom's relationship to ideology.

Human Nature

The first component of ideology, a systematic belief in human essence, is the practical foundation of an ideology. This component takes up the subject of the *subject*. Upon trying to decide what is the ideal and yet the most practical way for human society to be socio-politically structured,

propaganda/organizational activities⁶¹. I assume that somewhere in this logic lies the opinion that post-revolutionary life would somehow manifest itself naturally (as if to assume a specific aspect of human nature), or that the "leaders" of the revolution could be trusted, in all their benevolent wisdom, to sort out the details and set things right after the fact. It should be noted that the two most successful anarchist movements, the CNT-FAI in Spain and the Mahknovchina in the Ukraine, had before them developed revolutionary socio-economic practices prior to and during the actual period of revolutionary fighting, albeit for a short time.

Why wait for the revolution with your fingers crossed? Wouldn't it be a safer bet to have developed the productive, social, and cultural practices in the present? The revolution, if necessary, would then literally be the new way of life removing the remains of the old. And without this practical development, whose to say that a consolidation of power along the lines of the Bolsheviks consolidation of the free soviets would not occur once more without the development of a sufficiently anti-statist, non-capitalist culture grounded in years of tangible practical development? More realistically speaking does anyone, outside of the last few misguided old guard revolutionaries, actually believe that the masses are even remotely interested in the traditional methods and aims of revolution? Why would any one be interested in overthrowing the existing order without have any tangible evidence of what they are fighting for? There may be an idealistic few, but not enough to truly represent the masses. There *is* a place for revolution in any anarchist future. The dominant society will always seek to co-opt or repress those that challenge it. But that revolution must represent something beyond sentiment. It must represent an actual way of life, actual behavior, actual practices, actual culture.

So what about this practical anarchism makes it so

as a theorist could be extremely useful to the anarchist movement of today.

In his book, *Anarchist Portraits*, Paul Avrich describes Landauer's view on how the anarchist movement could achieve its goals:

He spoke less and less of class struggle; and 'direct action' now meant the creation of peaceful cooperatives combined with passive resistance to authority rather than armed rebellion or acts of propaganda of the deed. For Landauer, moreover, 'general' strike came to mean not the cessation of work but the continuation of work for one's own benefit and under one's own self-management.... His idea resembled the IWW slogan of 'building the new society within the shell of the old'... he called on the people to create a free society 'outside' and 'alongside' the existing one.... to create what we would now call an alternative society in the form of libertarian enclaves within the established order that would serve as an inspiration and a model for others to follow. In other words, he conceived of revolution no longer as a violent mass upheaval but as the peaceful and gradual creation of a counterculture.⁶⁰

Landauer offers not only a reasonable alternative to traditional revolutionary-left strategies, but his strategy is also utterly consistent with anarchist principles and is as non-ideological a theory as one could propose. Landauer is speaking of *practical anarchism*; an anarchism no longer tied up in theoretical divisions based on ideological formations and no longer stagnant as a social movement.

All sects of anarchism contain theories of what post-revolutionary production and/or culture would consist of. These theories are driven by the hope of blueprinting a form of production and/or culture most consistent with anarchist principles and also one that is practically feasible. But nearly without exception, anarchist revolutionary movements, and most marxist ones as well, have almost entirely neglected the creation and development of these "future" social practices in the present, instead entirely preferring revolutionary

there must exist notions of what humans beings are and what they are capable of in the social context. These notions require the concept of a human essence, what some would call "human nature", defined as some innate quality of humans or what is essentially to be human.¹⁸ This offers ideologies a basis for the determination of what humans are capable or not capable of doing in a socio-political context.

A concept of a human nature acts like a set of borders for analytical and/or creative ideological theorizing. If there is a human essence, it would be impossible for humans to act against it. Therefore with human nature as a guide to the subject, an ideology can be formulated within realistic boundaries of human capability. Also, a notion of human nature acts as the foundation for corrective or promotional social devices upon human behavior. If human nature is a bad thing, as in the case of Hobbes, strong corrective measures must be applied by a central authority to protect humans from the "war of each against all". If human nature is essentially good, as in the case of Noam Chomsky, then people should be as unfettered as possible by the constraints of social and political authority so as to bring out their innate goodness, which in Chomsky's case is done through education. A sense of human nature does not have to be a general qualitative assessment about humanity. It could also include a specific belief in an innate faculty to reason, propensity towards physical violence, sexual activity, laziness or any characteristic or ability that one would consider innate to human existence.

On the other hand, a denial of a human nature confronts the ability to ideologize by the eventual fall into ontological relativism which leads to ethical relativism. Without a human essence as an ultimate reference point there is no basis from which logic can clearly work its way through the determination of a proper ethical system. How could one

solidify any concepts of which ethical social relations are to be striven towards, what justice is, i.e. what are the best possible living conditions for all humans to strive for without being able to retreat back to an understanding of that which is "un-natural"? An ontological/ethical relativist position espouses a belief in the subjectivity of human existence and subsequently denies a human nature, therefore could not, with out contradiction, formulate ideology. A belief in human nature is indispensable to an ideology.

As mentioned before, a concept of a human essence, as a guide to the subject, acts as the practical boundary of human capability. Therefore "human essence" also acts as a limit on the practicality of human freedom. The boundaries of freedom can assume many forms, depending, of course, on the concept of human nature it springs from. Basic questions regarding freedom, such as "what does freedom mean?", "how much individual freedom should an individual be allowed to have and under what circumstances?", "how much are humans capable of responsibly having", are answered at this initial stage. Theorist Mihailo Markovic described the relationship between the concept of a human nature and ideology in these terms:

*'Status Quo' ideologies tend to develop skeptical views....[a] reluctance to endorse any structural change because there are animal instincts in human beings which must not be released....Future oriented theorists, radically opposed to the injustices of existing society, tend to be very optimistic in their conceptions of human nature....'*¹⁹

For example, conservatives and most laissez-faire capitalists, with their penchant for law and order, tend to view human beings as naturally egotistic, aggressive, and primarily interested in the satisfaction of their appetites. As Thomas Malthus stated, men are "really inert, sluggish, averse from labor, unless compelled by necessity"²⁰. This

ble of predicting and/or controlling human behavior. The same could be said of philosophy. We don't know how to, yet ideologues still believe they can. The current crisis of the Left, and of revolutionary Marxism in particular, is directly related to the failure of its past predictive theories. They are now desperately trying to reconsider past theories, only to replace them with new ones. Maybe anarchism is at a crossroads. We either embrace the unpredictability of human activity and response and set your present and future plans accordingly or embrace ideology and follow in the footsteps of all the others who have failed before.

Anarchism as a non-ideology

And there is Anarchy after Anarchism.... Some may find the way - better yet, the ways - to a free future. - Bob Black 58

Ideology is implicitly coercive, explicitly so in active manifestations. It seeks, to a degree, the homogenization of humanity in the sense that it believes itself to be true for all. Any socio-political theory that stands so thoroughly against coercion, as Anarchism supposedly does, must avoid ideological pretensions. Hence, it must celebrate plurality in the individual and in social formations and practices. But if anarchism should not approach its cause as an ideology, the question then is how should it proceed as a non-ideology?

Near the end of his life, collectivist Gustav Landauer stated that "the State is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of human behavior; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently"⁵⁹. With all the contemporary lionizing of the "big three" anarchists, Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Goldman, and the persistence of the syndicalist/communist/individualist trichotomy, Landauer seems to be a somewhat lost figure in anarchist history. But in my opinion, Landauer's uniqueness

systems, but also of the ethics which gave birth to them. Marxist governments have "rehabilitated" (read: jailed, tortured, and killed) millions for behaviors and attitudes that were deemed "counter-revolutionary". Would any real anarchist be prepared to do the same? They would eventually have to if they are seeking to implement an ideology upon a region or community. Ideological systems inherently create deviance. And deviance must be "corrected" for the sake of the maintenance of that ideological system.

Bakunin railed against Marx's system building by stating "I am not a philosopher, and not a creator of systems like Marx". He further elaborated his view, "No theory, no ready made system, no book that has ever been written will save the world. I cleave to no system. I am a true seeker".⁵⁷ But the problem of system building has consistently plagued anarchism, including Bakunin himself. Indeed, one of the most glaring of contradictions within anarchism has been its skepticism towards empiricism and positivist thinking (excluding anarcho-communist followers of Kropotkin) and its reliance upon meta-theories of post-revolutionary societies. In fact, what mostly defines different anarchist sects is their adherence to a belief in the viability of a futuristic socio-economic system. During the peak of anarchist sectarian differences during the late 19th century, the anarchists, mutualists, and individualists were especially rigid in their predictive theories of the most practical and most anarchistic of post-revolutionary socio-economic systems. This activity of, and adherence to system building is what has divided anarchists and turned them into ideologues.

Name me one political theorist who has successfully predicted the socio-political outcome for their theory once it had practically established itself? Madison? Jefferson? Marx? Lenin? Mao? None of them have and for good reason. Social science has yet to provide proof that it is capable

view translates into a narrow, restricted notion of the limits of freedom ~~and the role of the individual~~. From starting at the point of human nature, the limits of freedom can be delineated, setting the stage for the role of freedom in the other aspects of an ideology.

A System of Ethics

The second component, a system of ethics reflective of the belief[s] in human essence, acts as a defining aspect of ideology. This is where a notion of human nature gets defined in terms of a system of ethics which is then applied to social formations. Without ethics, ideology is incomplete, left without urgency and relevance. In ethics lies notions of social justice, individual morality transposed unto issues of collective welfare and notions of proper and just social conditions. Indeed, with the concept of a human nature for the subject follows the concept of a "natural state of being" for the community of subjects. As J.S. Mill put it, "...politics is not the entire art of social existence: ethics is a still deeper and more vital part of it"²¹.

Different ideologies can be defined on the basis of their ethical differences. The individual and his or her role in society is the most obvious basis for these ethical distinctions. All socialist related ideologies are rooted in an ethical belief in social responsibility for the individual. In contrast, libertarian oriented ideologies place individual responsibility at the apex of their ethical systems. Another contrast would be ideologies ethically based on subservience to authority, such as monarchies, theocracies, or dictatorships. Further delineations of ideologies can be determined as having different levels and/or combinations of each of these in their ethical systems.

The ethical system component of an ideology acts as the justification of social corrective measures against "deviant" behavior. A social conscience, that is, cultural

behavioral norms of a people, is a fountain of power from which normalization based on ideological notions is nourished. Ideology is ~~in essence~~ a socio-ethical system, that is, a system of ethics which is applied by its adherents to all of society. Therefore, transgression against this system of ethics is at the same time a transgression against the ideological formation from which it is linked.

The ethical component of an ideology resides within the space between the core philosophical/metaphysical beliefs of an individual (or group of individuals) and the society it inhabits. Actions, concepts, and relationships that exist are reflected off of the core and translated into ethical terms. Does (fill in the blank) conflict with my sense of ethics as related to my understanding of human nature? Is (fill in the blank) ethical? Is (fill in the blank) just?

Most restrictions placed on personal freedom by the State are reflections of the ethics of the ideology of that State 22. Conversely, many acts are protected from legal persecution for the same reason. The act of political protest is an excellent example to illustrate the former and the latter. Dictatorships, whether they be strictly military or Marxist, view political protest against the government as an offense to their rightful authority, or in the case of Marxist dictatorships "counter-revolutionary". Authoritarian ideologies, for varying ethical reasons, view unquestioned authority of government as vital to the cohesion of society. It is socio-politically "unethical" to politically protest in those countries. On the other hand, democratic governments theoretically hold sacred the act of public protest. The freedom of assembly and speech, while not necessarily absolute, are a reflection of the ethics of liberalism, with its emphasis on freedom of conscience, public participation in government affairs, and "inalienable rights". In general, degrees and areas of freedom in a society depend largely on the ideological ethics of that society.

the very least, ideological anarchism would seek the adaptation of that ideology by all. Ideologies create States. Any form of anarchist thinking based upon ideological premises, that is, universalities in regards to ethics and justice, is in the end sum game statist.

A traditional anarchist caveat from the line of argumentation is that through the process of revolution the need to coerce others would be reduced to a minimum since individuals have been culturized to the wisdom of "mutual aid" mentality. Whether or not that would be the case is unknown, but surely the prospects of a entire world united under a certain system of ethics is highly unlikely, and ideal worthy of being called "utopian". More to the point, an entire world united under one ethical system is non-anarchist! Anarchism should, if anything, strive for the celebration of the uniqueness of the individual and the decentralization of not only production and power, but of culture and ethics.

Ideological anarchism is in fact closer to left-wing Marxism than it is to anarchism. The difference lies in the concept of difference. Revolutionary Marxism, regardless of the sectarian variant, relies upon semi-static methodologies of revolution and post-revolutionary socio-political structures and practices. The internationalism of Marxism sought to put in place specific models of government and production/consumption throughout the world. The development of Maoism and Guevarism challenged traditional orthodoxy regarding accepted methods of revolution and production. But, in general, qualitative differences in the political arrangements and the modes of production in Chinese, Soviet, and Cuban Marxist societies were sparse. The reason was that the Leninist model of revolution and post-revolution socio-political organization were based upon a fairly rigid system of ideological beliefs and those translate into equally rigid systems and methods of implementation. These methods of implementation have required enforcement not only of the

Emile Henry stated quite eloquently the incompatibility of anarchism and ideology:

Beware of believing Anarchy to be a dogma, a doctrine above question or debate, to be venerated by its adepts as is the Koran by devout Moslems. No! The absolute freedom which we demand constantly develops our thinking and raises it towards new horizons....takes it out of the narrow framework of regulation and codification. We are not believers! 55

Another take on why ideology and anarchism are incompatible is by simply pointing out that above all an anarchist is anti-statist. In the following quote, Alexander Berkman describes why all anarchists are against statism as a matter of principle:

All anarchists agree on this fundamental position: that government means injustice and oppression, that it is invasive, enslaving, and the greatest hindrance to man's development and growth. They all believe that freedom can exist only in a society where there is no compulsion of any kind. All anarchists are therefore at one on the basic principle of abolishing government. 56

What is a State ? It can be defined by random borders, or common cultural or historical bonds between people, or various other qualifications. But one condition that would definitively qualify an area as a "State" would be the enforcement of a specifically codified system of socially ethical behavior over a specific region and its populace. Translated into statist terms, a local, state, or federal government has jurisdictional rights to make and enforce laws within certain physical boundaries upon its inhabitants. Those laws are a reflection of the dominant ideology. If anarchism was ever to succeed as an ideology as I have defined the term earlier, it would need to enforce specific behaviors according to that ideology. It would have to make laws and enforce them. At

Current Socio-political Practices

The third component, the relationship of the first two to current socio-political practices, places ideology in its contemporary context. Contemporary socio-political structures and practices serve as the objects of critique or examples of legitimization for an ideology. It is the world in which an ideology resides that draws it out from an ethical theory onto a discussion of evidential support. The active world becomes evidence for the critique or legitimization of an ideology in relation to its, or another ideology's, concept of human nature and its corresponding ethics when it is considered a product of socio-political structures and practices. Government, capitalism, the environment, race, gender, indigenous peoples, technology, all of these things and the many others that make up the world in which we live effect and reflect the formation of ideology. Are these things ethical or unethical ? Do they impede or facilitate human nature?

Ideologies are in part formulated as negations of contemporary socio-political practices. Democratic ideology was initially formulated as a negation of feudalism and its practices. Marxist and anarchist ideologies were formulated in part as a negation of capitalism and parliamentarianism. Black nationalist ideologies were in part formulated as a negation of white supremacy and its practices. When socio-political practices run afoul of a system of ethics and its notion of human essence, a counter ideology is formulated reflective of those ethics. It would be possible (and has been done) to create schemas of ideologies based upon their positions regarding the active world, its history, and its contemporary practices.

The active world adjusts ideology and to some degree defines it, but does not necessarily effect its views on "human nature" or its core ethical system. Take the relationship between the Bill of Rights, slavery, the ideology of

white supremacy, and the ideology of liberalism in the U.S. for example. When the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791 ²³, it truly encapsulated and codified the ideological principles of the nation. Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence nearly twenty years prior, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness". But at the time of the writing of these documents, between twenty to thirty percent of the population was enslaved ²⁴. This was a reflection of the contradictions between the ideology of liberalism and the ideology of white supremacy. How could this glaring contradiction be remedied? Political scientist Robert Smith points out that:

Given the self evident equality of men and their God-given right to liberty - a right that cannot be surrendered and ought not to be taken - the obvious question is how can one simultaneously sanction slavery, the taking of the liberty of millions of men, women, and children. Logically...one, of course, could not, except by denying their fundamental humanity. ²⁵

The liberal ideology's core belief in a human nature and its corresponding ethics remained in tact. The status of slaves was simply not considered applicable. Blacks were viewed as inherently inferior, not quite human. Today, slavery has long since passed and the socio-political legitimization of the black race in America has institutionally and socially been recognized for approximately thirty five years ²⁶. This is testament to, amongst other things, the diminishing of white supremacy ideology on an institutional and individual basis in America. In other words, black people have, by and large, become fully human to the liberal ideology, a status it did not hold two hundred years prior. The socio-political status of black people have changed, but the liberal ideology, specifically its system of ethics, as enumerated in the Bill of

individual and collective expression of the masses over the conclusions of academics or party bosses. The Russian anarchist Voline (Vsevolod Mikhailovich Eikenbaum) stated such intimations:

The key idea of anarchism is simple: no party, or political or ideological group...will ever succeed in emancipating the working masses by placing themselves above or outside them in order to 'govern' or 'guide' them. True emancipation can only be brought about by the direct action...and not under the banner of any political party or ideological body....If Anarchists maintained that they could bring about a social revolution by 'guiding' the masses, such a pretension would be as illusory as that of the Bolsheviks and for the same reason. ⁵³

Similar sentiments were expressed eighty years later by syndicalist Lorenzo Kom'Boa Ervin :

Self-management will be established in all areas of social life...individuals will implement their own management of social life through voluntary associations. They will refuse to surrender their self-direction to the State, political parties, or Vanguards sects since each of these merely aid in establishing or re-establishing domination. ⁵⁴

It is the traditional syndicalist/anarcho-communist view that the masses themselves will rise to the revolutionary cause and that all that "revolutionaries" should do is instigate and participate, not lead. This is for the most part a critique of revolutionary tactics. But there is more to be drawn from this position. Ideology is an *a priori* view of beliefs, ethics, and tactics from which the individual enters into: it implies a hierarchy consisting of ideologue and follower. It is coercive in that it seeks to compel society to its beliefs. And it is exploitative much like religion in that it promises the coming or maintenance of the best possible socio-economic system for those who adhere to it. Ideology transgresses all three basic principles of anarchism, hence the hostility towards it.

municipalities, where Black asserts that " 'Democracy' is the 'rule of the people'. 'Anarchy' means 'no rule'" .⁵² Black is questioning Bookchin's theoretical commitment to anarchist principles, in this case the negation of hierarchy and coercion. Generally speaking, different sects critique others on the basis of a perception of coercive, hierarchical, and exploitative aspects within those theories. These are just two examples of many critiques of other anarchists that could be found in the writings of Tucker, Malatesta, Kropotkin, and numerous others.

Anarchism has always maintained a high level of theoretical fluidity which is a partial explanation for the diverse, and occasionally fierce, sectarianism. But surely "anarchism" means something. There is something that distinguishes anarchism from other socio-political discourses and yet holds together all the various theories under its large tent. Could anarchism be defined on the basis of a set of socio-ethical principles? If there is any sense of universality to anarchism, which there is, it lies in what all adherents to anarchism maintain ethically in regards to general social principles and practices. It just so happens that these defining principles are negations. Anarchists may not agree on issues of organization, production, technology, individualism, socialism, revolution, et al, but what truly defines them as anarchist is their belief in the negation of hierarchy, exploitation, and coercion.

The Problematic of Anarchism and Ideology

There has always been an anti-ideological position to be found somewhere within the anarchist milieu. Anarchism has traditionally had a mistrust of politics and political theory as elitist and non-representative of the masses and, tactically speaking, have given primacy to the dissolution of political bodies as opposed to their transformation. Most importantly, anarchists have consistently maintained the validity of the

Rights has remained virtually unchanged ²⁷.

The perception of just or unjust social conditions can be translated in terms of freedom. But the perception of an unjust social condition alone does not inspire concepts of freedom. The unjust social condition must be perceived as an unjust restraint. Any concept of freedom must rely upon the existence of a perceived restraint[s] that is viewed as a form of injustice by those it is perpetrated upon (and often by others who are without those specific restraints and view their absence as something that should be universal). The positive aspect of freedom, freedom to do in a manner currently or previously restricted, requires the negative of the state of restraint. Those restraints are of course historically and spatially relative. So therefore, notions of freedom find their diversity in the diversity of perceived restraints (i.e. ethics and justice) and the diversity of the individual perceiver's space in a society. It is in this sense that ideologies can be in part defined by notions of freedom and perceptions of restraint.

When viewed in ideological terms, the material objects, ideas, as well as socio-political structures and practices which make up society become issues of freedom and restraint. Ideology is often formulated on the premises of which and to what degree are the following things perceived an unjust restraint: property, capitalism, forms of government, religion, the family, race, gender, sexuality, culture, etc. . To what degree should those things viewed as unjust restraints be alleviated? Capitalism as a practice is an excellent and most widely argued example. For Marxists and anarchists alike, capitalism is viewed as the "right to exploit the work of those who possess neither property nor capital and who thus are forced to sell their productive power...a truly human and free society could only be attained through the radical transformation of this system of inequality" ²⁸. For neo-capitalists, capitalism fosters freedom:

...just as the capitalist market transcends old boundaries of clan, tribe, and even nations, so the individual in a capitalist society can continuously transcend the boundaries of his biographical starting point...individual autonomy developed in Western civilization in a dialectical interaction with the autonomy of market forces. The necessities of the entrepreneur become the rights of the individual, and vice versa. 29

Capitalists and radical socialists, at least of the marxist ilk, oppose each other with an inverted vision of freedom/ restraint. Communists view communism as freedom and capitalism as slavery and capitalists view the precise opposite. Another example would be racism. Segregationists defend their racist principles and actions on either issues of the federal government infringing upon state's rights or the freedom of the individual to exclude. Civil rights advocates, on the other hand, view racism and its extension segregation as a slavery of the mind and an unjust restraint upon the inalienable rights placed of minorities. From material objects such as technology or guns, to historical traditions such as patriarchy or to socio-economic practices like capitalism, ideologies are often developed and defined from the perceptions of aspects of society as unjust restraints.

Teleological Intent

The fourth component, teleological intent, is what the ideology sees as its ultimate goal for society and the individual. It also acts as the inspiration for those who support it. Communism, as outlined in the *Communist Manifesto*, would be an example of the teleological intent of Marxists, as would anarchy for anarchists.

Oddly enough, teleological intent is something that never manifests itself in reality, or at least not completely. Dominant ideologies, or those who have current socio-politi-

all anarchists, transgresses the principles anarchism. When this critique based on anarchist principles is aimed at other self-avowed anarchists similar results occur, as in the case of the anarcho-communist critique of the mutualism of Proudhon:

Moreover, in a collectivist regime the worker remains a wage slave of the community that buys and supervises his labor... We must put an end to the morality of account books.... This method of remuneration, derived from modified individualism, is in contradiction to collective ownership of the means of production.... It is incompatible with anarchism.... Service to the community cannot be measured in units of money. Needs will have to be given precedence over services, and all the products of the labor of all must belong to all, each to take his share of them freely. To each according to his need should be the motto of libertarian communism 50

The issue in question here is the use of money and whether or not it contradicts anarchist principles. This specific example could be expanded to include any example in-fighting over whether or not a theorist or theory transgresses anarchist principles. In his critique of Murray Bookchin's vision of post-revolutionary anarchist society, Bob Black claimed that Bookchin was in fact not an anarchist at all, but a city-statist:

Dean Bookchin is not an anarchist....[he] is not opposed to government....Bookchin is a statist: a city-statist. A city-state is not an anti-state.... There has never been a city which was not, or which was not part of, a state.... The pre-industrial state was the antithesis of democracy, not to mention anarchy.... Many anarchists believe, and many anarchists have always believed, that democracy is not just a grossly deficient version of anarchy, it's not anarchy at all.... When the Dean speaks of transforming existing local institutions.... he can only be referring to participation in local politics.... To sum up: Dean Bookchin is a statist. 51

Black's critique is based upon Bookchin's anarchist vision of post-revolutionary society based on "direct democracy"

and property (capitalism) as restraints. But not just any kind of restraints. These three each maintain elements of hierarchy, coercion, and exploitation. Anarchists stand against religion not only because of the hierarchical organizational structures of religions and the hierarchical metaphysical notions that "God is everything and man is nothing" ⁴⁷, but also because of the coercive nature of its codes of morality, and the exploitative nature of the exchange of allegiance to a deity for eternal salvation ⁴⁸. Anarchists stand against the State, regardless of its manifestation, because it is hierarchical by exerting authority over the individual; it is coercive through legislation, and it is exploitative in that it receives its power by usurping the self-determination of individuals. Anarchists also stand against capitalism because it is hierarchical in the sense of the owner/management/laborer relationship, it is coercive because those who do not own the means of production must sell their labor to survive, and it is exploitative because the owners gain surplus wealth from the labor of the workers.

The sectarianism within anarchism is in part due to disputes over whether practices transgress these principles or not. When describing his position as a collectivist, Bakunin stated:

*I hate communism because it is the negation of liberty and because humanity is for me unthinkable without liberty. I am not a communist because communism concentrates and swallows up in itself for the benefit of the State all the forces of society....whereas I want the abolition of the State, the final eradication of the principle of authority....I want to see society and collective or social property organized from below upward by way of free association, not from above downwards, by means of any kind of authority whatever. I am a collectivist, not a communist.*⁴⁹

In this passage, Bakunin defines himself in opposition to Marxist-communists. Notice his use of the phrases "the negation of liberty" and "the eradication of the principle of authority". Communism, for Bakunin, and it is safe to say for

cal structures and practices modeled after them, are in a curious position in relation to teleological intent. Those supportive of dominant ideologies are at times reluctant to claim that their teleological ideal has been completely fulfilled, while at other times allow the ideology to take credit for society, regardless of the length of time or force of power that the ideology maintains. This is usually due to normative nature of the subject matter under consideration.

For example, American democratic, neo-capitalist ideology has maintained itself for over one hundred years³⁰ and has been supported by the majority of its citizenry consistently throughout. In times of economic prosperity, the dominant ideology is given credit for the improvement in the aggregate standard of living and its maintenance. But if a segment of the population is still not benefiting or an evil social practice like racism persist or if the nation as a whole has hit economic hard times, the ideology is exempt from blame. Events or practices that contradict the ambition of a dominant ideology are "transitional" or examples that the "democratic ideals set forth by our fathers are yet to be completely achieved". This behavior also has existed in Marxist nations, where benefits accrued to society are examples of the "progress of the revolution", but when things such as economic shortages or the usurpation of social and political freedoms is criticized, the ideology is not to blame, but these occurrences are merely transitional byproducts of a "revolution in progress".

Today, the teleological aspect of ideology is all about freedom. For the dominant ideology, freedom exists in its most capable form, and if not, it will soon get there if society stays the course with a few minor adjustments here and there. For opposing ideologies, the status quo is impeding the potentiality of the best possible degree of freedom based upon a notion of human nature and the ethics reflective of that notion.

Practical Expression

The fifth part, practical expression, is how ideology translates itself into human activity. Upon his critique of Marx and Engels' negative conception of ideology, Louis Althusser agreed to the obfuscative aspect but asserted that in fact there was a very real aspect to ideology:

It is not, therefore, to be thought of as a system of ideas in people's heads....but as the necessary condition of action within the social formation...a material practice [in that] it exists in the behavior of people acting according to their beliefs. 31

Whether it manifests itself in the formulation of laws and constitutions, in a barstool argument, a yank on the voting lever, or the organization of a socio-political movement, ideology as a systematic manifestation of consciousness must eventually present itself in activity, regardless of how significant or banal those actions might be.

The formulation and legitimacy of laws and constitutions is based upon their relationship to ideology as an ethical system. In the case of a Western democratic society, laws are often overturned on the basis of their "unconstitutionality", in other words their relationship to the principles of a constitution as formulated in accordance to an ideological system of ethics. The ideology is *a priori* to the creation of a constitution and its subsequent laws. But, dialectically speaking, the ideology only becomes real and active when it is codified and enforced.

Other political examples of this would be the formation of political organizations. For Lenin the creation of a vanguard party or for Ross Perot the creation of a political party, are examples of ideology moving into the world of action and attempting to either subvert, adjust, or reinforce the dominant ideology and/or its related social practices.

Existence constitutes boundaries. Therefore, as long as subjects and objects constitute existence, there will always be, theoretically speaking, boundaries to surpass.

Instead, it would be more accurate to say that anarchists have worked within specific margins of human capabilities when theorizing the limits of human freedom. An anarchist is defined by their belief in the practicality and desirability of societies devoid of hierarchical, coercive, and/or exploitative structures and practices. What is relevant here is that different Anarchists have theorized within these margins based on anarchist principles differently. They have focused on differing concepts of freedom, and therefore played off of different restraints. It is these differing notions of freedoms and restraints that have not only given Anarchism its identity from other socio-political ideologies, but have also given to it its unusually diverse sectarian complexity. It should also be mentioned that different Anarchists have lived in different types of societies at different times and therefore occasionally dealt with different restraints for critique

The core practical restraints from which the definition of anarchism derives are systems of hierarchy, exploitation, and coercion. Therefore all anarchist notions of freedom consist of the negation of these. Conversely, theories that include or justify the existence of hierarchical, exploitative, and/or coercive practices would not be considered anarchist 45. Take for example a quote from Emma Goldman:

Anarchism is the great liberator of man from the phantoms that have held him captive....Religion, the dominion of the human mind; Property, the dominion of human needs; and Government; the dominion of human conduct, represent the stronghold of man's enslavement and all the horrors it entails. 46

In this quote, Goldman is speaking of religion, government,

anarchism", Murray Bookchin's *Social Ecology*, David Watson and the Fifth Estate's anti-technological spin on anarchism, L. Susan Brown's "existential anarchism", Green Anarchism, the Black Anarchism of Lorenzo Kom'boa Erwin, and Anarcha-feminism are all examples of the multiplicitous nature of the identity of contemporary anarchism. Not all contemporary anarchisms are explicitly ideological, though many still are. Regardless, the anarchisms of today, like those of the past, are bound together in the negation of hierarchy, exploitation, and coercion and the desire to discover the limits of human freedom.

The Ethos of Anarchism

The basic ethical principles of Anarchism revolve around concepts of freedom and liberty. In this respect, anarchism is not so distinct from any other ideology or set of socio-political principles. What distinguishes anarchism from the rest lies in the placement of its margins of what degree of freedom is desirable and/or possible for humans to have. In principle, anarchism seeks the total possible obliteration of all restraints to human freedom based in hierarchy, exploitation, or coercion.

One of the (many) traditional jabs against anarchism brought forth by its conservative, liberal, and Marxist critics is that anarchism seems to uniformly imply the potential of a freedom without boundaries.⁴³ Indeed the most often used pejorative when describing anarchists as theorists and anarchy as a form of social organization has been "utopian", suggesting that anarchist proposals run counter to reasonable assumptions of the barriers of human capabilities in regards to freedom. Anarchist ideals of freedom are usually determined to be, in a word, impractical. It is easy enough for an anarchist to dispense of this without boundaries myth with a very simple maxim: "freedom without boundaries can be found only in a state of complete nothingness"⁴⁴.

Other examples could also include social practices that become institutions of the dominant ideology. Trial by jury is an example of this. In this practice, citizens are not only asked to be in substantive judgment of a defendant (did they do it?), which ideology plays a part in determining, but they are also asked to be in ethical judgment as well (if and how much punishment should be meted out in relationship to cultural ethical norms and traditions). A more banal, yet just as ideological example would be the Jenny Jones, Sally Jesse Raphael, or any other T.V. talk show. On these shows, individuals which comprise the panel are of two kinds: social deviants and social conformists (the host and the audience are always of the latter). The entire theme of the show revolves around the confrontation and possible salvation of the deviants by the conformists. It is in this manner that the dominant social ideology seeks to annihilate those outside of it, who, because of their positioning, have been determined to be unethical.

In its practical expressions, ideology becomes coercive in the sense that it seeks to correct deviant behavior (as defined by its ethics in relation to its physical surroundings) with a sense of justice and/or morality (as defined by its ethics) as its justification. Practical expression is an unavoidable aspect of ideology. Ethics guide our behavior and ideology is a system of ethics. It is definitely unlikely and probably impossible for one to construct an ideology or to accept one without feeling compelled to act, consciously or unconsciously, in some manner upon that system of beliefs.

When ideology manifests itself into practical expression, it no longer is a question of which and to what degree, but of how the goals of freedom should be achieved. Concepts of freedom have inspired some of the most significant political moments in the history of Western civilization, if not all of them to some degree. From the American

Revolution to the Russian Revolution, from the Paris Commune to the end of slavery, freedom has been the principle from which ideological practices are inspired. When active ideological duels occur, both sides claim that it is freedom they are protecting or producing. During both Red Scares in the U.S. (Wilsonian and McCarthyism), the political establishment was actively protecting the democratic freedoms of its citizenry from the Communist threat, those freedoms which it believed the Communists to be conspiring to deprive the masses of. The Communists (and anarchists) on the other hand participated in activities which sought to inspire the masses to remove the restraints of capitalism (and representative democracy), therefore unleashing what they believed to be the promise of a new age of freedom. During the physical battles over ideology, it is different concepts of freedom which is at stake. The lines are usually drawn over different determinations of what freedom is and over the manner best suited to protect those that exist 32.

Assessments

I would like to make a few general assessments from this outline. First, that ideology is indeed systematic in the sense that there is a consistent path of beliefs that an ideology maintains. That it is not suggest that individuals of the same ideological ilk hold the same opinions on all subjects. That is obviously false. Nor am I suggesting that ideologies are intrinsically static. What I am suggesting is that while an ideology may move and adjust to certain historical currents, it always remains true to its core philosophical and ethical fundamentals, those things which give it a sense of identity.

Second, as related to the first point, an ideology professes fixed truths about humanity, whether identified as "inalienable rights" or "human nature". Therefore, it is exclusionary towards all things outside of it. A Marxist may state that an ideological opinion that runs counter to Marxist ide-

run counter to anarchist negations of hierarchy. Another example would be Proudhon's mutualist proposal for the allowances of small holdings of private property in his anarchist vision (a position also held by most individualists). Anarcho-communists and syndicalists criticize any holding of private property as not being consistent with the principles of communitarianism, specifically running afoul of the negation of hierarchy and coercion (the use of property to coerce others into involuntary acts).

Teleological intent also blurs into the ideological component of practical expression, and practical expression is yet another component of ideology that divides anarchists. The primary issue at hand is organization. Various anarchist sects believe in specific forms of organizations as pathways towards, and to be integral social practices of, the futuristic societies they promote. Collectivists, anarcho-communists, and syndicalists all view their preferred modes of organizations as not only integral parts of their revolutionary strategies but as the primary organizational modes of production. Some individualists, to the contrary, abhor the types social organization proposed by their socialist/communist compatriots. Occasionally, specific practical expressions which are non-organizationally rooted have also divided anarchists. The terrorism of Nechaev and the late 19th century acts of "propaganda of the deed" are examples of this.

Of the components of ideology, the last three, current socio-political practices, teleological intent, and practical expression, are the ones which have divisive capabilities within anarchism. Conversely, it is the ethics of anarchism which unites different sects and thinkers. This is leads me to believe that it is these ethics of anarchism which give anarchism its identity.

Today there is a wide variety of anarchisms. Anarchism is more intellectually diverse than ever before. John Zerzan's neo-primitivism, Hakim Bey's "ontological

Where anarchism begins to fray is on other issues, such as money, technology, theism, and labor.

Disagreements occur over whether or not these objects and practices contradict anarchist principles. For example, a deep schism has evolved between anti-technology anarchists (Fifth Estate collective members and John Zerzan) and those who feel that technology in is fact neutral and has liberatory potential (Murray Bookchin, syndicalists, and others). Another example is the question of theism and whether or not the concept runs counter to anarchism. Tolstoy has been described as a pacifist-Christian-anarchist. This is has been tolerated, probably grudgingly, by most anarchists. But even today there are groups of anarchists who consider themselves "Christian" anarchists, interpreting the teachings of Christ as consistent with anarchist principles. This is completely at odds with the traditional atheism espoused by most anarchists. Other issues have further divided anarchists. In sum, contemporary practices and structures have the ability to distill anarchists into sectarian divisions.

The teleological intent further segments anarchist theory. While all anarchists desire societies which do not transgress the ethical principles of anarchism, debates which occur over the previous ideological component spill over into this one. If one believes a certain practice to be consistent with anarchist principles, that practice will likely appear in the future society that individual desires. The converse of that is also true. For example, anarcho-syndicalists traditionally have visualized mass production as the product of unions which are federated locally, then regionally, then over an even larger land mass, if necessary. This would necessitate representatives of the unions and the various federations for occasional congresses and other administrative realities. Individualists, and some anarcho-communists, have criticized this strategy complaining that the creation of any kind of representational bodies, no matter how benign,

ology or methodology is "bourgeois", but what they are implying is that the opinion is "false". Empirical evidence is usually of little help, as the interpretation of the evidence is almost always guided by ideological biases³³. When guided by ideology, a person believes only what they want to.

Ideology, then, behaves much like a religion, in the sense that it professes not only a understanding of metaphysical issues (what humans and society are all about) but it holds those "truths" to be absolute and, most important to this discussion, to be projected upon society.

Third, ideologies are predominantly intellectual formations. While they inspire action, they are only on occasion active in themselves. They can inspire revolutionary or transformative activity, but are not a substitute for those activities themselves. Unfortunately, because ideology can be so utterly entrenched in the ethos of an individual, *thinking* ideologically can often be enough for many people. It is as if one believes they know truth and justice but do not feel it necessary or possible to act upon it. If you ideologically adhere to contemporary society, you may feel your participation is not necessarily required because the system can take of itself. If you stand against it, it may seem so overwhelming that any potential efforts would seem pointless. Also, modern society offers so few substantial outlets for the average person in terms of ideological activity. Much of the power within modern states is either tied up in bureaucracies or requires substantial amounts of wealth to exert.

Voting, participation in polls, the signing of petitions, letter writing, etc are all activities that act as a direct extension of opinion. People in general do not change or build things. They offer their opinions to those select few with the power to do so. In a society so enarmoured with political opinion and so resistant towards political action, thinking ideologically is a much more accessible and often pleasurable option.

Fourth, individuals often define their identities, to dif-

tering degrees, on an ideological basis. Often in this process, the "I" becomes the "we" and the ideology and its own sense of ethics and reason replaces the ethics and reason of the individual. This brings about a further comparison to religion, where the unique experience of the individual, developing their own unique intellectual formations, is discarded, or at least downplayed, when decisions of ethics requiring opinion arise. The primacy of the religion, or in this case ideology, is asserted, whether it be in the form of a text or an ideologue. In reply to this phenomenon, Michel Foucault stated :

But the problem is, precisely, to decide if it is actually suitable to place oneself within a 'we' in order to assert the principles one recognizes and the values one accepts.... it seems to me that the 'we' must not be previous to the question; it can only be the result - and the necessarily temporary result - of the question as it is posed in the new terms in which one formulates it. 34

Fifth, and most relevant to this essay, ideology is inherently coercive. Those who adhere to an ideology believe that their system is not only what is the most practical but also the most ethical socio-political system of arrangements possible. Therefore, the ultimate advancement of that ideology would mean not only the institutional expressions of that system, but total social adherence to it as well. All crime within a given society is a transgression against the ethics of that society which are expressed in its dominant ideology. Societies based on ideological systems must have within them means for the enforcement of that ideology, i.e. law. Furthermore, ideology works against the identity of the individual and the plurality of human experience. It seeks to essentialize human social capabilities in a manner based on ethics and practicality, clearly (and sometimes not so clearly) delineating what behavior is desired

chism's resort to the idea of a benign human essence is to justify its resistance to power.... People are essentially good; if the obstacles to that goodness are removed.... they will realize and express that goodness in their activity. 40

In sum, anarchism as an ideology must rely upon the belief of a good, or at the very least benign, human nature in order for it to legitimize its critique of authority, representation, and coercion.

With "good" or "benign" as its stance on human nature, the issues of ethics comes next in the analysis. Generally, anarchist ethics are consistent regardless of its ideological position. David Wieck summarized anarchist ethics accurately when he stated, "Anarchism can be understood as the generic social and political idea that expresses negation of all power, sovereignty, domination, and hierarchical division, and a will to their dissolution....." 41

Alexander Berkman gave an even more succinct version, ".... anarchism teaches that we can live in a society where there is no compulsion of any kind". 42

Anarchism uniformly stands against hierarchy, exploitation, and coerciveness, at least in principle. The ethical aspect of ideological anarchism is something all anarchists agree upon, regardless of sectarian position or view of ideology. The causes of sectarian divisions in anarchism can be identified in the next three aspects of ideology.

The first of these is the relationship (criticism or adherence) of this ethical system to current socio-political practices and structures. Regarding most socio-political practices, anarchists are in full agreement with each other. This is where the negative aspect of anarchism comes into view, i.e. those things which anarchism seeks the negation of. Amongst these are capitalism, statism, organized religion, racism, sexism, and written law. These practices are intrinsically either hierarchical, coercive, or exploitative.

at anarchism as an ideology, evidence of the five aspects of ideology is not too difficult to come by.

The first aspect to be examined, a systematic belief in a human essence, is a fairly uncontroversial aspect of ideological anarchism. Ideological anarchism has, in general, professed a belief in an inherently good human nature. This "good nature" view has primarily attacked the paternalistic pretensions of the State and religion in relation to society. Murray Bookchin stated :

The revolutionary project must take its point of departure from a fundamentally libertarian precept: every normal human being is competent to manage the affairs of society and, more specifically, the community in which he or she is a member. 38

A common criticism of anarchism is that it has an overly optimistic view of human nature. Many anarchists have gone to great lengths to dismiss this critical line of thinking. But instead of discarding the issue of a human nature outright, many instead have tried to offer support for the view of human nature they espouse. Peter Kropotkin stated in his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Human Evolution*:

Sociability and the need of mutual aid and support are such inherent parts of human nature that at no time of history can we discover men living in small isolated families, fighting each other for the means of subsistence. 39

Todd May accurately identifies why anarchism as an ideology is reliant upon the view of an inherently good human nature:

At the core of much of the anarchist project is the assumption, first that human beings have a nature or essence; and, second, that essence is good or benign, in the sense that it possesses the characteristics that enable one to live justly with others..... The point of anar -

and possible for people to partake in. Accompanied by any allegiance to an ideological system is a submission of individual rationality to the rationality of the ideology.

Penultimately, one could make the argument that the pluralist ideal effectively dismisses my claim that ideology is inherently coercive. Pluralism, in the form of J.S. Mill, Jefferson, and others holds the ideal of civil liberties, freedom of conscience, association, etc.. But, in my defense, "ideal" is indeed the proper word to use when describing pluralism. There has yet existed a nation built upon civil liberties that has not maintained policies, either federally or locally, which contradicts those very same principles, whether in the name of "national security" or the protection of non-political moral codes or traditions. In reality, a government as a reflection of ideology cannot give you freedom, only limit how much you have and guard those boundaries accordingly. And in guarding those boundaries as defined by the ideology it must act coercively so as to defend the ideology from deviance. So even in the most pluralistically governed society, there will always be a need for law enforcement as well as groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union to challenge government when it transgress those principles it is supposed to defend. To this day, there has never existed a government which has remained consistently true to pluralist ideals, regardless of the rhetorical emphasis placed upon them.

Lastly, freedom acts upon ideology with enormous definitive presence. I can only guess that this is even more the case so in present times, where democracies and democratic ideologies are the rule, not the exception, as has been the case in previous times. The concept of freedom, freedom which exists at the practical boundaries without surpassing them, is what is perpetually sought after in these times. Of course this has many interpretations. Freedom and justice are relative concepts. I simply believe that ideological

battles in the future, as they have been in the past, will be fought over concepts of freedom and between different ideological notions of what that means.

Anarchism and Ideology

Anarchism....rejects all absolute schemes and concepts. It does not believe in any absolute truth, or in any definite final goals for human development.... The greatest evil of any form of power is....to force the rich diversity of social life into definite forms and adjust it to particular norms. -Rudolf Rocker 35

This essay is centered around the question of whether or not anarchism is appropriate or effective as an ideology. Since I have previously laid out the qualifications for what constitutes an ideology, I will now examine anarchism as it relates to ideology. This examination will first entail a description of anarchism as an ideology. As stated earlier, basic definitions and explanations of anarchism are plentiful. Without delivering an elaborate history of the subject matter or a thorough examination of all the theories that have developed from within anarchism, I will instead offer a general summation of anarchism utilizing the model of ideology I outlined earlier. This examination is by no means exhaustive, especially in regards to describing the diversity of anarchist thought in the present. Nonetheless, analyzing anarchism through the ideological model I have devised will help to isolate those ideological aspects of anarchism which give it a sense of unity and disunity. Through my ideological analysis of anarchism I will try to distill a consistent ethical system, an ethos of anarchism if you will, and compare that ethos to anarchism's formation as an ideology. This comparison will lead me to my conclusion that anarchism and ideology are intrinsically opposed to each other.

Anarchism as an Ideology

As I stated earlier, the origins of anarchism are nebulous. Prior to Pierre Joseph Proudhon's initial coining of the term "anarchist" to refer to himself and his mutualist theories, various theorists critiqued statism and hierarchy while constructing visions of stateless, egalitarian societies. Gerrard Winstanley, Charles Fourier, Robert Owen, Adam Weishaupt, and William Godwin, to name a few, attacked statism, law, royalty, and various other manifestations of dominion. From the pure libertarianism of Godwin to the quasi-anarcho-communism of Fourier, all of the above pre-anarchism anti-statist authors viewed the State as the primary impediment to general virtue and happiness amongst men: "There is but one power to which I can yield a heartfelt obedience, the decision of my own understanding, the dictates of my own conscience" 36.

From this loose-nit melange of anti-statist ideas of the 18th century came the first concrete manifestations of anarchism. Much like the libertarian and utopian socialist theorists before them, Proudhon and Bakunin, the first two theorists of anarchism, strongly emphasized humanism, rationalism and positivism in their work. This rationalistic approach reached an apex decades later in the work of Peter Kropotkin who pursued a scientific basis for anarchism through biological studies. Anarchism's beginnings were indeed ideological, a product of the Enlightenment era. I mention this to clarify that traditionally anarchism, in its manifestation as a vehicle for social change, has been dominated by ideological thinking. The only exceptions to this can be found in the works of the Left Hegelian Max Stirner, neo-Nietzschean Individualist works of the late 19th/early 20th century, and today in some authors who are either not explicitly syndicalist/communist or who advocate a "post-structuralist" methodology to their work 37. So, when looking